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ABSTRACT

This publication represents the concerns and questions cf participants of four regional institutes on recreation education held in 1969. General concerns are the nature of the recreation movement, the steps necessary to establish recreation programs, and the employment of its graduates. Presently there is a manpower shortage in organized recreation that community colleges can fill. Community colleges can initiate associate degree curriculums in recreation prcgram leadership; offer shorter-term certificate programs; provide services to re-orient previously trained career personnel; implement continuing education programs; and be a recreation resource itself. The joint responsibilities of an employing agency and a community college are recruitment of students, recruiting and maintaining knowledgeable teachers, equating job responsibilities with educational backgrounds, and evaluating recreatien programs. Other issues and concerns relating to content and administration of the programs are: finances, technical assistance, adequate physical facilities, curriculum content, field work, specialization, related careers, job placement, transferability, student financial aid, certification, and accreditation. (CA)

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RECREATION PROGRAM LEADERSHIP AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Issues and Perspectives

By H. Douglas Sessoms and Peter J. Verhoven

JC 710

In the two-year recreation program leadership curricula we have a potential of great promise in its very infancy. Let's nourish it with all the proper ingredients, that it may grow big and strong: a credit to all of us who are involved with it and of great and important service to the people of America.[1]

Sidney G. Lutzin, Director
Professional Development Services
National Recreation and Park Association

[1] Excerpt from an address given at the Western Regional Recreation Institute, Sacramento, California, September 25, 1969.

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FOREWORD

In the fall of 1967, the Division of Manpower Development and Training of the Office of Education contracted with the National Recreation and Park Association to develop a two-year post-high school curriculum in recreation program leadership. A national advisory committee was established with representatives from various recreation and educational interests. With the staff of the National Recreation and Park Association, the advisory committee developed a guide for the creation of two-year recreation education curriculums. It was published by the U. S. Government Printing Office in the fall of 1969.

Upon the completion of the curriculum guide, the National Recreation and Park Association enlisted the support of the American Association of Junior Colleges to increase awareness of the need for two-year post-high school curriculums in recreation program leadership. With the support of a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, *these two associations began a series of regional institutes. They were held during 1969 on the campuses of Erie County Technical Institute, Buffalo, New York; Miami-Dade Junior College, Miami, Florida; American River Junior College, Sacramento, California; and the University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.*

Each regional institute provided a forum for recreation educators, college administrators, and recreation practitioners to discuss the impact of the two-year college curriculum in recreation leadership. The two-year college movement in recreation education is a relatively new one; consequently, there are many concerns and a variety of issues needed to be discussed. This publication expresses the concerns and questions of the participants of the four regional institutes. It provides a perspective for those embarking on two-year programs, and presents issues and directions for action.

Andrew S. Korim, Specialist in Public Service Education

QUESTIONS

The involvement of community colleges in preparing recreation professionals is so recent that little experience has been recorded to guide the development of existing and prospective programs.

One of the more tangible benefits of the four regional institutes was the identification of common concerns. These concerns were most often posed as questions which pertain to the nature of the recreation movement, the steps necessary to establish a recreation program, and the employment of its graduates.

These questions were compiled and are presented in this section. The responses to them provide a basic structure for the interpretation, planning, execution, and evaluation of recreation programs.

What is organized recreation?

Organized recreation is a product of the twentieth century. Initially, commercial and private efforts provided organized recreation, but more recently, it has become the concern of government. The concept of organized recreation includes those agencies and organizations which provide recreation experiences for its membership or users. These agencies and organizations employ hundreds of thousands of workers and contribute significantly to the economy of the nation.

Public recreation is the cornerstone of the organized recreation movement. The public element embraces the activities of federal, state, and local government; and, depending upon its legal mandate, the public agency administers a recreation program service or operates a park system. In some instances, it does both. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, in 1965, over 3,100 cities, villages, towns, school districts, and park and recreation districts administered a local recreation service. They managed some 700,000 acres of recreation land and employed 100,000 workers. They offered programs ranging from sports and athletics to the management of arenas and civic centers. The scope of interest of organized recreation is as broad as are the

concerns of the public. Its personnel are charged with the responsibility of providing those services and managing the facilities in which those experiences occur.

Is there a manpower crisis in organized recreation?

Yes. Despite the increasing number of colleges and universities offering recreation curriculums, the unforeseen demand for recreation services has created a manpower crisis. The new leisure of the American worker, coupled with increased affluency and mobility, has increased the demands placed upon the organized recreation system. Recreation is emerging as a major service field, and current manpower sources cannot provide the necessary leadership. According to the recent manpower study ("Recreation Park Personnel Supply and Demand Study," National Recreation and Park Association, 1968), organized recreation will employ 1.5 million persons in 1980; of this number 260,000 will require at least a two-year education in the field of recreation services. At present, less than 2 per cent of that number are graduating from four-year recreation curriculums. Increasingly, their graduates move quickly into administrative and supervisory positions. The deficiency of trained staff at the activity and program level will consequently reach crisis proportions in the immediate future unless new educational approaches are instituted.

Where are the jobs?

The most critical manpower need is with the local public recreation departments, particularly at the program level. In the more densely populated urban centers, the need is apparent for supervisory staff and program specialists who are sensitive to the problems facing the inner city. At the federal and state level, the

need for staff is at the supervisory and consultive levels. Planning specialists, particularly those involved in the development of natural resources and program planning for special populations, are in great demand. Hospitals, mental health clinics, agencies serving the aged, industrial organizations, and camps also need recreation program specialists.

Employment requirements in organized recreation vary widely and depend upon such factors as local traditions, the degree of responsibility assumed by the recreation agency, and civil service and other legal employment restrictions. Some recreation positions require highly specialized preparation in program areas such as music, drama, physical education, business, and planning. However, for most recreation positions at the program level, a general preparation in recreation services is preferred and may be obtained through both formal and informal educational experiences. To qualify for an administrative or supervisory role, recreation personnel are usually required to have a baccalaureate degree with a major in recreation or a related academic field. Those with an associate degree are generally employed at the program level as recreation leaders.

What does a recreation leader do?

Recreation leaders most frequently engage in organizing and conducting recreation activities, giving direct leadership in the teaching of recreation skills, operating recreation equipment, and supervising recreation programs. They operate community centers, playgrounds, nature centers, and campsites; they supervise arts and crafts, drama, sports activities, and dance events. Recreation leaders work with all age groups from the preschooler to the older citizen in any setting in which a recreation service is administered.

The recreation leader may be a highly skilled program specialist in a particular activity area such as music or sports, or he may be a generalist functioning in providing a wide range of recreation experiences. In some

instances, he is a volunteer or a part-time worker; in other instances, he may be a two- or four-year college graduate. Increasingly, recreation agencies are looking to the community college curriculum for its program leaders, activity specialists, and facility managers.

What are the chances for promotion for the community college graduate in recreation services?

Although the administrative and supervisory positions in recreation are most frequently filled by baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate degree graduates, the associate degree graduate in recreation should not be restricted in the pursuit of his career. As he grows professionally through continuous educational programs and experiences, he may qualify himself for positions of increased responsibility in the program or move directly into the administrative line. To fully qualify for the latter position, additional formal educational experience may be required. As in any other field, the chances for promotion and increased responsibility are largely based on skill, education, experience, and ambition.

Depending on opportunities within the given recreation system, the associate degree graduate may need to move laterally before he can advance vertically in his career. In other words, he may need to change employers and move to another section of the country where opportunities for advancement are more prevalent.

The organized recreation field is so young and dynamic that it has not established stringent employment requirements. It affords opportunities for career development with ambition and performance as essential elements for promotion. Recreation is a fertile field for the emerging leader, the inner-city resident, the socially concerned, and activity specialist—for anyone who is interested in service to his fellow man and who is willing to use his intelligence and resources.

What is the role of the community college in organized recreation?

The community college is an agent of the community, and therefore is in a position to respond to its needs. In terms of recreation, the community college has the potential, and often the obligation, to contribute significantly by initiating associate degree curriculums in recreation program leadership; offer shorter-term certificate programs; provide services to reorient previously trained career personnel; implement continuing education programs; or a feasible combination of these.

As society's leisure needs change, it is imperative that the skills and competencies of those providing services reflect the latest techniques and methods to assure quality services. The community college should be flexible enough to meet these needs head-on by providing both degree and continuing education programs. The latter may take the form of specific subject-matter courses for midcareer personnel, workshops and institutes on highly specialized topics in the field of recreation, or may be expanded to sponsoring conferences on recreation which cover a wide range of important material. The former may include the associate and certificate program offerings and appeal largely to recent high school graduates.

Most community colleges have programs in music, art, physical education, dramatics and others which, if properly structured, could contribute to a total education for leisure. These programs might well be expanded to provide service courses for the student body, faculty, staff, and community citizens to prepare them with the proper and varied skills essential to adapting to the rapidly evolving leisure-centered society.

Also, the community college should recognize that it is a community recreation resource. The faculty of many programs could be called upon to lend technical assistance and to provide voluntary leisure services to the community. The abundance of excellent physical facilities usually available on a community college campus ranging from auditoriums and gymnasiums to meeting

rooms, from sports fields to specialized laboratory facilities, should be made available when possible for community groups and agencies to utilize in supplementing their programs and services.

What is the responsibility of the employing agency to recreation education?

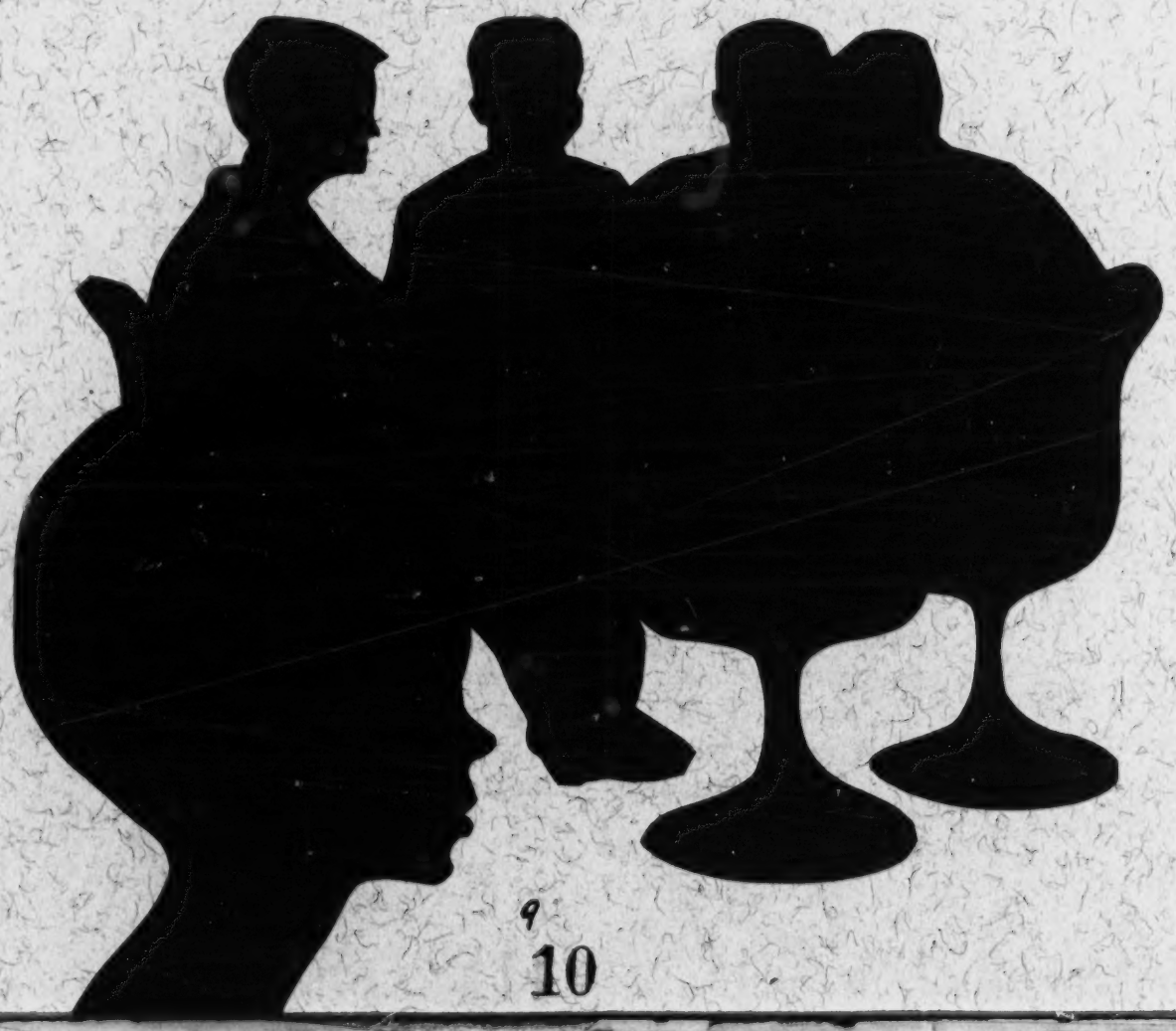
The employing agency is a vital contributor to recreation education. The agency executive and his staff have an obligation to assure the public they serve that their personnel are of the highest quality. This necessitates a constant awareness of the latest trends and methods of the field and implies that the staff be imbued with the current techniques and concepts of recreation training.

The agency has a responsibility to understand the strengths and limitations of the community college as a contributor to recreation education and to take full advantage of every potential assistance it can afford. This implies that the agency fully utilize the community college educational resources by having its staff enroll for coursework and attend those workshops, institutes, and conferences related to recreation programs sponsored by the community college. The agency should be encouraged to reward those who participate in these programs. These rewards may be in the form of tuition grants, compensatory time, increased salary and additional job responsibility. Although education and experience should not separately determine an employee's growth and salary potential with the agency, some combination of both should be used to ease vertical advancement.

The recreation agency can further solidify its relationship as a partner in recreation education by allowing community college recreation students the opportunity to test out classroom theory by serving in field experiences under the constant supervision of agency personnel. In this respect, the agency is contributing to the

education and preparation of future recreation professionals. The agency benefits by having an opportunity to evaluate prospective candidates for later employment, broadens its service base by using the student as a resource, and provides an opportunity to test its services against current theory.

The recreation agency should assist the community college to assure a quality program. Inadequate physical facilities at a community college could considerably hamper proper instruction. With this in mind, recreation agencies should make available their facilities for student observation and use by the community college recreation program. Likewise, the recreation agency employs persons with distinct and varied expertise in many facets of the field. It should be willing to assist the community college in providing the best possible education for the student by sharing this expertise as full- or part-time instructors or guest lecturers.



What are the joint responsibilities of the agency and community college?

The recreation agency and the community college as partners in recreation education have many joint responsibilities. Uppermost among these is the commitment to produce the highest quality leadership to meet the public's leisure needs and interests. To reach this goal, each should recognize the strengths and potential contributions of the other and should avoid undue duplication of services and expenses. Both have an obligation to attract the proper students into the program and to make sure that enough jobs are available to them upon graduation. Recruiting of students is a joint responsibility. Both parties must share the burden of properly educating the guidance counselors and the general citizenry about the merits of quality recreation leadership. Quality leadership requires quality instruction, and both should join efforts to recruit and maintain efficient and informed instructors.

The community college recreation graduate is a relatively new product in the field of recreation. Professionally trained recreation administrators who only recently became conditioned to employing personnel with baccalaureate degrees may be somewhat reluctant to staff the associate degree graduate. This should not be an insurmountable problem, but its existence must be recognized. The demand for the baccalaureate graduate has substantially increased in service positions at higher levels which may leave many openings for the community college graduate. Since the holder of a bachelor's degree is becoming unavailable for positions at the entry level, the husbanding of available professionally trained personnel makes it essential to carefully plan and promote their best use. Therefore, it is the joint responsibility of the agency and the college to equate job responsibilities with educational back grounds.

To assure good acceptance of a new product, it is vital that it not be oversold. It should be recognized that the community college graduate should perform only

those services for which he has been prepared. It is therefore essential that both parties be actively and continuously engaged in the process of curriculum development to assure that the proper objectives are being stated and met, and that the course of study, in its entirety, is relevant.

The process of evaluation is a continuous one. It must become an important and ongoing part of the curriculum in recreation program leadership and be the shared responsibility of the college and the employing agencies. The following questions may be appropriate ones to raise in evaluating the program:

1. *Have entry-level job assignments of graduates been performed satisfactorily?*
2. *Are program objectives being met?*
3. *What is the evaluation of employers regarding program graduates?*
4. *Are enough qualified students being graduated?*
5. *Have all resources (community college, community agencies, facilities, and other educational institutions) been fully utilized?*
6. *Do projections of need equate to the extent of enrollment by the community college?*
7. *Are employers demonstrating awareness of the strengths and limitations of graduates through job assignments?*
8. *Has the number of qualified applicants for the program increased?*
9. *Have graduates qualified for advancement to new levels of responsibility?*
10. *Has the recreation program coordinated its efforts sufficiently with baccalaureate institutions to assure an appropriate transition for students motivated to continue their education?*

How may these joint responsibilities be realized?

Many community colleges have found the establishment of an advisory committee a useful device in program development. This is especially true with the conducting of the local manpower survey, the recruiting

and selection of students and faculty, the placement of graduates, and the development and evaluation of the curriculum.

The members of the advisory committee should reflect all sectors of the recreation field: public, private, voluntary, commercial, religious, and educational. Whenever possible, a representative of a senior college recreation curriculum should be included, as his presence and expertise may reduce some of the difficulties which arise when community college graduates elect to transfer to the four-year curriculum.

Information pertaining to the number of members, selection criteria, membership rotation, and further responsibilities can be obtained by reading Albert J. Riendeau's *The Role of the Advisory Committee in Occupational Education in the Junior College* (published by the American Association of Junior Colleges, 1967).

How can the advisory committee help in program development?

As previously stated, the program objectives of the institution, the student, and the community can be furthered by the establishment of an advisory committee whose responsibilities range from planning to the implementation and evaluation of a recreation leadership curriculum. In addition, the committee can be most useful in securing appropriations for the support of a program, but its greatest contributions lie in conducting a feasibility study prior to program initiation to assure curriculum relevancy.

Often a community college initiates a program based upon a national or regional need for personnel without either being properly equipped to provide the standards of performance necessary to do an adequate job of preparation, or having "close at hand" employment opportunities available for graduates, or both. If a new program is completely contingent on national or regional needs, students unwilling to become mobile job seekers are afforded an injustice if the community

college administration does not make them cognizant that jobs are few in the area.

Information should be obtained from potential recreation employment agencies concerning their present staff levels, rate of attrition, and anticipated increases in staffing to clearly understand the extensiveness of employment opportunities for graduates.

The identification of existing needs for qualified personnel is not the only prerequisite to program initiation. Some recreation agencies may be restricted to offering positions to community college graduates because of existing recruitment or licensure regulations. Other agencies may have a built-in education program of staff in-service training or short-course education to satisfy competency requirements. Still other agencies may be able to satisfy their employment needs from already existing college training programs in the area, thus making a new program unnecessary. It is essential, therefore, that community colleges contemplating a curriculum in recreation program leadership study all existing alternatives and barriers. In this respect, the advisory committee should seek the assistance of local recreation practitioner societies, state recreation commissions, and those national and federal agencies responsible for regulating job requirements in recreation through licensure or certification standards.

A need survey may also reveal certain specialized manpower deficits indigenous to the area. For example, the college may be located in a resort region where recreation tourism is a leading industry necessitating large numbers of personnel for highly specialized and localized positions. The advisory committee should then concentrate on the generic need and not attempt to suggest programs whose content reflects a field of recreation virtually nonexistent in that vicinity.

It should be noted that acute shortages are apt to occur often in the field of recreation, as it is a "developing field" still to recognize the breadth of its potential. In this respect, because of particular regional needs or a particular type of recreation facility, some local needs may be critical and will continue to be so even though national trends and demands are less acute.

It is not unusual to augment a program void of enrollment restrictions which soon may reverse the supply and demand cycle after the first few classes of students have graduated. For this reason, the community college, with its advisory committee, should study manpower needs on a continuing basis and be prepared to make program adjustments accordingly.

What steps are necessary for curriculum implementation?

The U.S. Office of Education has developed a guide to assist community colleges in implementing the two-year recreation curriculum. This publication, *Recreation Program Leadership: A Suggested Two-Year Post High School Curriculum,* is available through the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

Written by a select group of recreation practitioners and educators, it provides a description of the socioeconomic phenomena contributing to the recreation explosion and the ensuing manpower crisis which has evolved. It describes the role and contributions of the graduate of a post-high school curriculum in recreation program leadership and presents a detailed analysis of the general items to consider prior to starting such a venture. Topics such as advisory committees: faculty; student selection, advisement, placement, and follow-up; texts; references, and other educational media are included. The course content and relationship of a recreation curriculum are described and an actual program of study is suggested. Other curriculum matters such as fieldwork and specialization are also discussed. This document will prove most advantageous to those concerned with preparing people to become recreation program leaders.

Brief descriptions of courses, actual topical unit outlines complete with texts and references, and multimedia aids are presented to assist in making the instruction relevant. The next selection of the publication concerns itself with facilities, equipment, and costs.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The commitment to initiate or critically evaluate a recreation program leadership curriculum goes beyond the mere asking of questions. This commitment requires the identification and disposition of both direct and indirect concerns. Many of them are common to all new program undertakings; the uniqueness in this situation is their application to the preparation of recreation leaders. The following section attempts to deal with some of the major concerns raised by the participants of the institutes and the editors of the recreation program leadership publication. These concerns primarily relate to the content and administration of the program.

Faculty

The procurement of a qualified director and teaching staff is prerequisite to an effective course of study in recreation program leadership. To insure proper development, the recreation faculty must above all else be qualified by both education and experience in the specific field for which they are providing instruction. The success of a program hinges on the relevancy of instruction. Ideally, faculty members should possess a first-hand knowledge of the field by virtue of their having served as practitioners. Advanced education of at least a master's degree with major emphasis in recreation should be a criterion for selection.

An equivalent of two full-time faculty members is most often deemed the minimal number of persons to begin the recreation program leadership curriculum. This number could be supplemented with part-time faculty or visiting lecturers as program offerings would dictate. The director of the program might conceivably divide his time between formal instruction in the classroom and general administrative responsibilities such as overseeing budget requirements; coordinating the counseling, advising, and placement of students; and directing the public relations efforts. The second faculty person would be involved primarily in the instructional program and with the supervision of the students during their supervised field work experience.

Community colleges will find assistance in the procurement of faculty by consulting various state or national recreation associations that generally maintain files of the professional credentials of their members. The American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation and the National Recreation and Park Association jointly publish a list of colleges and universities with curriculums in recreation. Some of these curriculums provide specific options for master's and doctoral students interested in pursuing a teaching career at the community college level.

Student Recruitment

Recruitment of students is affected by two major factors: the availability of employment and the salaries paid students upon graduation. The availability of jobs is abundant in the field of recreation as manpower studies indicate. The setting and type of agency a student desires is almost assured if that student is willing to accept employment regardless of community or immediate proximity.

The matter of salary is a different issue. Some agencies and locales still do not adequately compensate personnel for their services, yet this condition is fast being alleviated. State recreation commissions and societies have been partially responsible for increasing salaries as well as the added respectability and receptivity being given to leisure service agencies of late. The National Recreation and Park Association operates a job placement service which provides active members with an up-to-date reporting of available job opportunities. Many positions advertised through this service call for graduates of recreation program leadership curriculums and carry with them salaries beginning between $6,000 and $7,200, but the possibility of a lower beginning salary should be realized and realistically faced.

Good programs will ultimately attract sufficient numbers of students, but it may be necessary in the initial stages of a program to actively recruit students through a number of media. Such media include a pamphlet or brochure explaining the program of study, visitations to high school career days, alerting high school guidance counselors to the program, or displays and exhibits at a variety of youth-oriented meetings and conferences such as 4-H meetings or scout jamborees.

A close working relationship with the personnel of the local recreation-related agencies should produce additional prospective students.

Finances

It is extremely difficult to accurately determine the finances necessary to open and conduct a program in recreation program leadership. Some financial outlay may be necessary prior to initiating a program to conduct the local manpower survey. This is an important investment, since the results may indicate that a program is not feasible and will ultimately save the community college considerable money.

Recurring expenditures will need to be appropriated annually to employ and retain a quality instructional staff. The salaries paid these individuals should be comparable to other teaching members of the college. In fact, because of the extreme shortage of qualified recreation instructors, it may be necessary to pay more. Additional funds will need to be expended annually for equipment and supplies necessitating a sufficient budget for these items. Initially, the cost of equipment and supplies may run between $7,500 and $10,000 for quality purchases.

If facilities of other programs both on-campus and in the vicinity of the college are not available for use, potentially large capital outlays may be necessary.

An annual appropriation of approximately $30,000 is not unreasonable to defray the costs of faculty salaries, equipment, and supplies.

Technical Assistance

It is important that community college administrators become knowledgeable about the field their college hopes to serve. The contents of this monograph provide a cursory overview of the nature and extensiveness of the growing field of recreation, but are not to be construed as a basis for precluding a more extensive understanding of the leisure services industry. Conversations with local recreation officials will augment this document and provide a current status report of the services of the community recreation system.

The rapid emergence of the leisure services industry has made the task of identifying all potential employment opportunities a difficult one. Too often it is thought that persons prepared through a recreation program leadership curriculum are restricted to employment with "traditional agencies" such as recreation departments operated by a municipal jurisdiction. It should be understood that this is a fallacious assumption. Qualified recreation personnel are employed by a variety of municipal, metropolitan, county, state, and national agencies; industrial and business firms; voluntary organizations; commercial recreation enterprises; religious groups; patient-care institutions; and private recreation associations. All, or many, of these potential employment groups may be operating in the immediate vicinity of a community college and should be contacted to discern the potential job placement opportunities for graduates. On the other hand, if there are relatively few recreation-related agencies in close proximity to the community college contemplating the initiation of a recreation program leadership curriculum, it may be feasible to abandon plans for such a program.

The regional offices of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, National Recreation and Park Association, and others are helpful resources in indicating trends and specialized employment potentials for the field. In addition, financial assistance might be obtained through such units of the U.S. Office of Education as the Division of Manpower Development and Training, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped or from programs such as the Education Professions Development Act and Title I of the Higher Education Act. It may also prove advantageous to review the Foundation Directory, (The Foundation Library Center, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1964), as this source often lists some private foundations which have strong interests in recreation.

Facilities

Adequate physical facilities are an important ingredient in implementing an effective recreation program. They

represent substantial long-term investments, but such outlays are totally justifiable and necessary in meeting program objectives.

Many of the facilities required for an adequate instructional program may already exist and be in use by other programs such as those of music, industrial arts, and physical education. If additional facilities are needed, the "multiple use" concept should be followed to spread the cost over several uses.

The extent of the instructional program will in many instances dictate the nature and types of facilities necessary. However, recreation program leadership curriculums should at least have, or have access to, a gymnasium, swimming pool or lake, arts and crafts laboratory, classrooms, offices, storage space, and ample outdoor teaching stations such as athletic fields. In many instances, community college athletic, campus recreation, and intramural programs may already operate such facilities, and with proper scheduling, these facilities could be used by the recreation program.

Cooperation with local public and private sources may reveal that other facilities exist in the community which could be made available to the recreation program provided they were within the immediate area and relatively accessible timewise. In some cases, the community college may possess the facilities, and similar cooperative arrangements can be developed to allow outside agencies to make use of the facilities.

Administration

Recreation is an emerging public service field. It has its own philosophy and suggested courses of study and should be administratively located in a division or department committed to the public affairs or community service fields. Too often it has been mistakenly assumed that recreation curriculums should be placed in physical education departments, since the traditional baccalaureate recreation program is often administered in such a way. Also, the sports interest of recreation agencies suggests a physical education relationship. It

should be pointed out that recreation is also related to art, music, management, and planning. A sound recreation curriculum draws upon all the resources of the institution inasmuch as the recreation specialist is both a developer of activity programs and an interpreter and manager of recreaton services.

The administrative location of the curriculum will depend upon the resources of the institution and its perception of recreation education. If the institution is primarily interested in developing program specialists more concerned with the needs of specialized populations, an administrative location in an allied health division may be desirable. If the interests are along the lines of preparing activity leaders, the physical education or applied arts division is a logical choice. Each situation will differ, but it should be noted that the success of the program will depend largely upon the freedom that the recreation staff has to develop its program as reflected in the philosophy of those administering it.

Curriculum Content

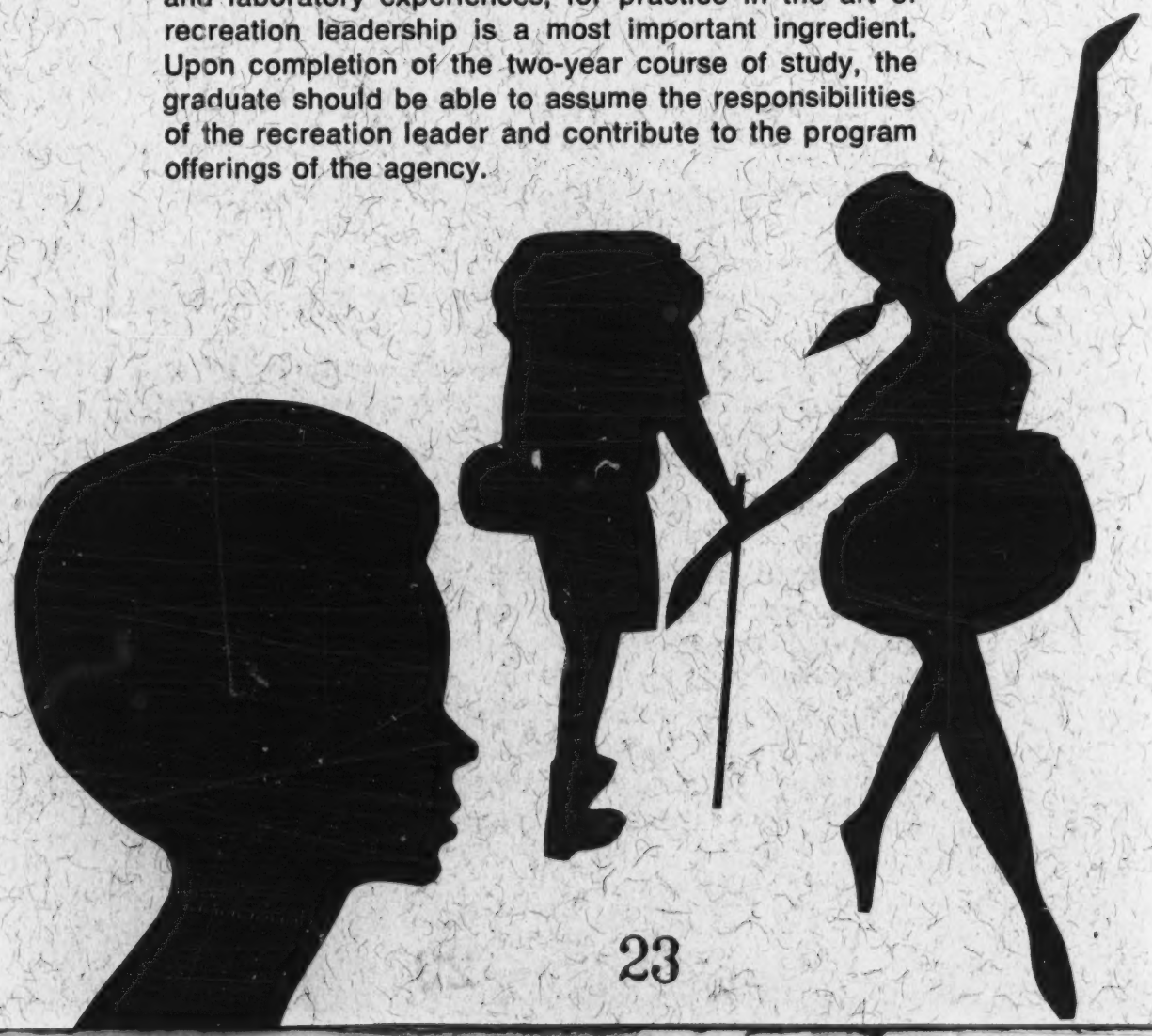
The two-year course of study should have three objectives:

1. *To provide him with the beginning competencies of recreation programing for immediate entrance into the field*
2. *To equip the graduate with an understanding of the recreation movement, its objectives, and its principles*
3. *To build on the general education of the student.*

To accomplish these tasks, the student will need both formal academic training and practical work experiences in which he provides a direct service for program participants. The former may be accomplished through a series of course experiences; the latter occurs through supervised field practice.

The suggested associate degree curriculum in recreation program leadership, as described earlier, is predicated upon fulfilling these objectives. The suggested content of the courses and sequence of courses reflect

the concern of the advisory committee to offer a realistic education program. An associate degree program becomes sound by drawing upon the strengths of the institution while at the same time coupling the resources of the college with the recreation agencies within the community. The general educational component of the curriculum includes course work in communication skills, the behavioral and social sciences, the natural sciences, and the humanities. The specific professional recreation course content is restricted to an introduction to the nature of recreation services, program planning and organizing of recreation experiences, and supervised field work. Opportunities to develop activity skills and program competencies may be obtained through the offerings of related curriculums such as art, physical education, music, and outdoor education. Considerable attention is given to the development of the field work and laboratory experiences, for practice in the art of recreation leadership is a most important ingredient. Upon completion of the two-year course of study, the graduate should be able to assume the responsibilities of the recreation leader and contribute to the program offerings of the agency.



Should the two-year institution decide to offer an abbreviated course of study for those interested in a certificate program, it could delete some of the general education and fieldwork requirements. The remaining activity and professional education courses would adequately prepare the student for employment at a lesser level of beginning competency. The proposed program of study must be tempered by the needs, resources, and experiences of the community and the institution.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork experiences of the two-year graduate are vital to his professional growth and understanding. They should be carefully selected and should properly acquaint him with the nature and diversity of the organized recreation movement. They should allow for the implementation of the theory, philosophy, and skills of the classroom and provide practice in human relations.

The ideal fieldwork sequence would allow the student to progress logically from a dependent position of leader aide to an interdependent position of group advisor. It is essential that the student, institution, and cooperating agencies understand the philosophy of the fieldwork experience and the responsibility each is to assume. The selection of fieldwork opportunities is critical, and in all instances, the student should be regarded as a student and not expected to assume the role of a volunteer or part-time worker.

The person identified by the recreation curriculum to serve as faculty supervisor of fieldwork students should maintain a constant dialog with the agencies providing the fieldwork opportunities. He should have a background in recreation services and should schedule frequent conferences with both the student and cooperating agencies.

Specialization

The philosophy of most community colleges recommends developing programs which meet the needs of

the immediate community or areas it serves. In some instances, that need is for trained recreation leaders to work with specialized populations, such as the aged in nursing homes or patients in an institution or rehabilitation center. The college may be somewhat hesitant to offer a specialty within an already specialized field of service, but the question must be raised.

In general, it is not advisable to provide specialization within the two-year recreation program. The limited time available to adequately prepare the student for employment makes further specialization impractical. However, through appropriate guidance and course selection, it is possible for a student to be introduced to specialized areas of service. These opportunities are further enhanced when the student is able to have a fieldwork placement with one of the more specialized recreation service agencies. For example, a student interested in therapeutic recreation might take additional electives in the health sciences and serve the major portion of his field work in an institutional setting.

Although not recommended, it is possible to offer a program of specialized recreation education at the associate degree level. When this is done, the more specialized educational experiences required are taken in lieu of the general education courses. Embarking on a specialized program of recreation education dictates the choice in fieldwork opportunities and limits the employability of students upon graduation. Also, it poses more problems for students interested in transferring their coursework to senior colleges.

Related Careers

The major objective of the recreation program leadership curriculum is to produce recreation leaders. Its students come to it seeking professional preparation; its graduates are usually employed by recreation agencies. However, not all of its graduates go into organized recreation as a career. Some go into related fields of service, while others choose careers in unrelated areas of study. Consequently, the recreation program should

be broadly enough based that it does not limit persons not choosing a career in recreation services.

The problem of transferring into a related field of study is not a critical one, since the recreation curriculum is human relations based. Those electing it as a major are given adequate preparation for employment in a variety of service professions. Recreation curriculums are people oriented. Its graduates have beginning competencies of human relations and understand the importance of organization and proper management of resources. A recreation graduate would not be handicapped should he choose a career in social services, conservation, rehabilitation, or community organization. It is not the responsibility of the two-year recreation program to prepare students for careers in these related fields, but the education they receive in recreation will certainly not handicap them should they desire employment in one of the aforementioned.

Placement

It is the responsibility of the college offering a recreation program leadership curriculum to assist the student in job placement. If the institution has a placement service, it should be made aware of the agencies in need of recreation program leaders and should help prospective employers meet and interview students approaching graduation. If the institution does not have such a service, the recreation staff should draw upon the resources of its advisory committee and its national and state recreation organizations. The National Recreation and Park Association has a personnel service and various state recreation agencies and commissions keep a current listing of available jobs.

Transferability

With an abundance of career opportunities available to qualified associate professionals, particularly those at the program leader level, the community college is more than justified in providing a career-oriented recre-

ation curriculum. There also exist, however, a number of transfer-oriented recreation curriculums which basically consist of a college or university parallel program and emulate the freshman and sophomore years of those programs. It is recognized that some students may elect to transfer to a baccalaureate program to continue their formal education. It should not, however, be the major objective of recreation program leadership curriculums to contribute to this practice, as a major objective of the associate degree program is focused on the preparation of associate professional personnel for early entry into the field.

Community college recreation programs should make the student cognizant of the possibility of losses of credit should he elect to transfer to a four-year college or university, but the college should also be prepared to assist the student who chooses to do so. This implies an understanding on the part of the community college administration of senior college policies regarding course acceptance, curriculum changes, admission requirements, etc. It is suggested that closer relationships and open dialog exist between both institutions. To assist in the process of articulation, the college administrator may wish to consult the *Guidelines for Improving Articulation Between Junior and Senior Colleges,* published by the American Council on Education.

Student Financial Aid

WORK-STUDY PROGRAMS

One of the most important components of a quality curriculum in recreation program leadership is the nature and extensiveness of fieldwork experiences. The methods and mechanics of these experiences were described earlier in this publication. Some community colleges may have to place students in agencies far from campus, making constant observation and evaluation of student performances a difficult, if not impossible, task for the faculty supervisor. Likewise, travel distance may be too great to permit students to commute easily.

One logical solution to these problems would be to require students to participate in a summer-long field experience, but this situation may place undue hardships on some students. Another approach could be to have students involved for the entire semester in a field placement, although this arrangement might extend the length of time for graduation with little or no financial compensation being obtained by the students.

Still another alternative could be to so structure the program of study that courses would be offered in shorter and more extensive "block" arrangements than a semester in length, leaving the remainder of the semester for "block" placement of students in fieldwork experiences. This can be an effective method, but is often difficult or impossible to work out if the same course scheme is not followed campuswide.

A method employed extensively, particularly in professional schools of engineering, which has proven successful, is the work-study or cooperative program. This is a system of alternating semesters of college-level work between formal classroom attendance and practical work experiences. In this fashion, a student is able at several times during his college career to put into practice over extended periods of time the theories and philosophies garnered in the classroom. At the same time, the student would be gainfully employed in providing a service to the employing agency and picking up valuable practical exposure and experience for a lifetime career. The added benefit of such a program could be its attractiveness to midcareer personnel who could still be afforded extensive supervision and consultation as to their performance while enrolled as students.

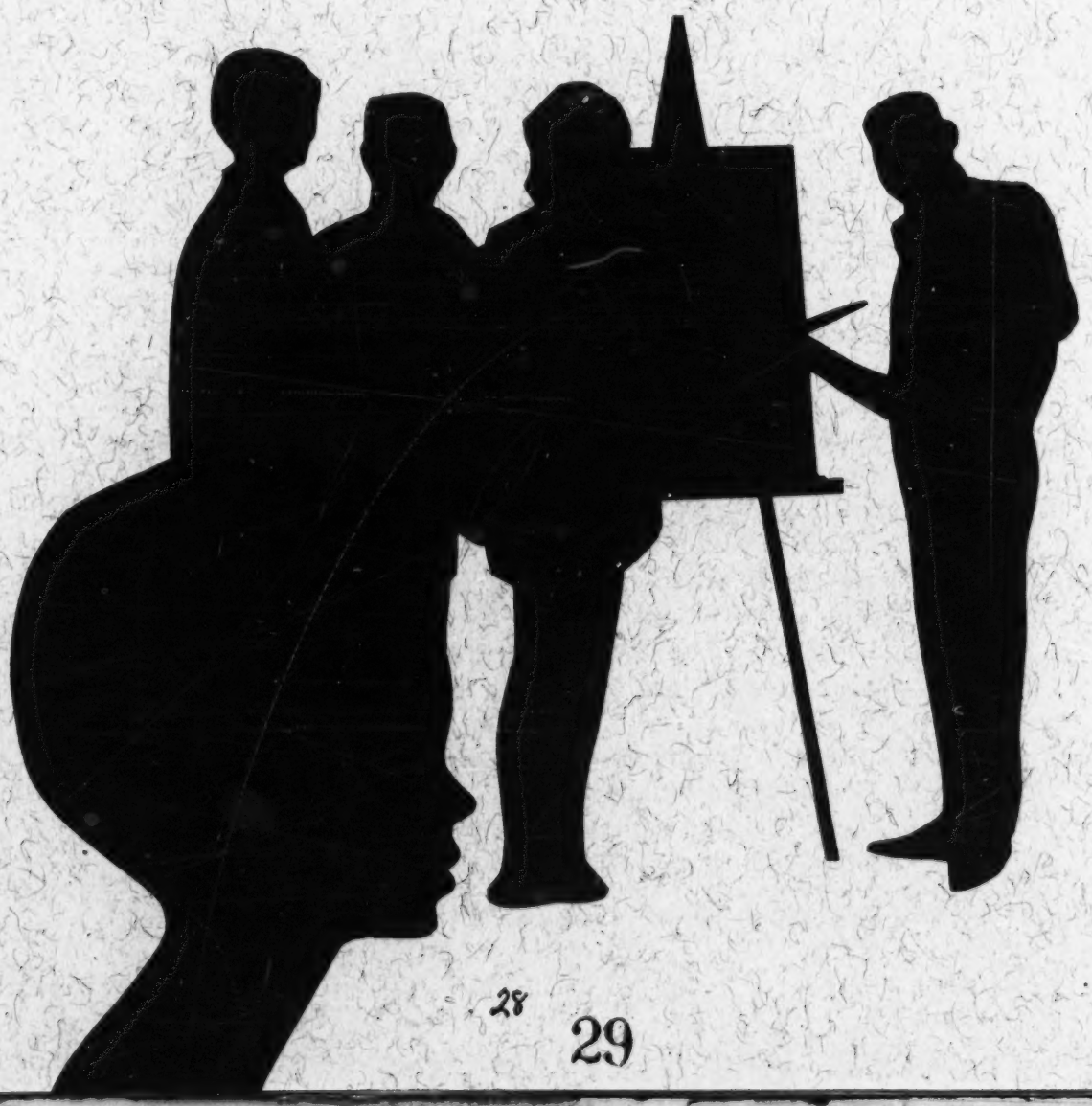
There are other useful ways of employing work-study programs which community colleges might also consider. One would be to offer classes during the late afternoon or evening, thus providing students an opportunity to work during the day. In some areas, recreation-related agencies might offer extensive evening programs, in which event scheduling might be reversed.

Still other situations may be available on a community college campus for students to be employed on a part-time basis with the intramural or campus recre-

ation department. His work schedule could then be arranged to allow him to continue to pursue coursework at the same time.

There perhaps is no single right way or standard ratio between percentages of classtime and practical field experience other than to make sure that the latter is provided in sufficient enough intervals of time to have the student gain a first hand exposure to the field.

Community college recreation programs are urged to experiment with new and different methods of providing the necessary skills and competencies to have students adequately perform their roles as practitioners. Hopefully, through experimentation will come the proper amounts and ingredients of a quality education.



AGENCY ASSISTANCE

Education is a continuous process. It does not stop with the receipt of a certificate or degree. The changing demands and new innovations evolving in the field of recreation require that recreation personnel keep up to date in the field.

Many agency executives provide in-service training programs to which they expose their staff. Where such programs are not provided, the agency is encouraged to send staff to state, area, and college extension workshops, institutes, and conferences at agency expense. The agency executive should also provide time off the job with pay for personnel wanting to continue their formal higher education.

If the agency executive understands the importance of staff development and provides for it in his budget, the quantity and quality of his program will grow.

Certification

Currently, only a very few positions in the field of recreation require that the job-holder be professionally certified. However, two states have created State Boards of Recreation Examiners who administer tests, conduct interviews, and approve an individual's credentials for certification. More such systems are expected to develop. In addition to these legislatively developed programs, several states administer a voluntary registration plan and maintain a certain degree of professional licensure in this manner. States without such plans can have their personnel apply for registration through one of the branch societies of the National Recreation and Park Association. This association, as well as state practitioner societies or commissions, should be consulted for the most recent actions regarding certification.

In some instances, certification and registration plans of states as well as registers administered through the U.S. Civil Service Commission continue to serve as barriers to employment for many two-year graduates because of their failure to recognize persons below the bachelor's degree level for positions. This situation is

being remedied. Indications of this change are already evident in the professional education standards of many state registration plans and in the augmenting of the relatively new GS-188 Recreation Specialist classification of Civil Service.

Accreditation

At present there is no national accreditation of recreation curriculums, although an accreditation effort supported by the Federation of Professional Recreation Organizations is underway. The federation has developed criteria for evaluating four-year and graduate recreation programs and is currently testing the instrument through a series of pilot studies. It proposes to submit a plan for accreditation to the National Commission on Accreditation as soon as the pilot evaluations have been made. Copies of the evaluation instrument are available through the National Recreation and Park Association. It is possible that the recreation program leadership publication of the U.S. Office of Education may become the basis upon which an accreditation effort for the two-year programs is made at some future point. The format utilized in the development of this publication is compatible with that of the accreditation project now under way with the Federation of Recreation Organizations, and program chairmen should be aware of this effort as they establish their two-year curriculums.

The American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation and the National Recreation and Park Association annually compile a list of institutions offering a recreation major. Until accreditation is a reality in the park-recreation field, the listing of institutions by these professional organizations may be the nearest document to an approved list of programs.

The Challenge

The field of recreation has been ushered in on a tidal wave of leisure. Increased amounts of discretionary time

and disposable income are anticipated to increase for the immediate future, placing a greater responsibility on the recreation field to provide quality recreation programs to a leisure-concerned and demanding public. To see that the leisure needs and interests of society are met is going to require additional qualified personnel—more than are presently available to be marshalled from existing recreation education programs.

The community college has emerged as one of the most impressive factors in higher education in the last decade. It has the potential to contribute significantly to the growth and success of the field of recreation, as its products will represent the underpinnings of the profession. Success, however, is predicated on a great deal of planning and continuous evaluation. Standards of performance must be set high and maintained by those community colleges embarking on a program in recreation program leadership. The community college's extent of involvement in planning and evaluation to assure a successful endeavor should include the following:

1. *The community college must expound with sufficient clarity its objectives so that recreation employers and agencies come to realize the strengths and limitations of this type of higher learning institution in contributing to the field of recreation.*

2. *Recreation practitioner groups, recreation consultants, and others with experience in planning a community college recreation program must be utilized.*

3. *The program should be planned with the following student outcomes in mind: employment, development of potential for career growth, personal growth, and citizenship contribution.*

4. *A broad-based recreation advisory committee should be developed to explore all facets of potential involvement and for advice on the probable consequences of decisions.*

5. *Knowledge of national needs for recreation manpower should be supplemented by initiating local surveys which:*

a. Identify resources for program development

b. Acquaint administrators with existing recreation preparation programs
c. Build awareness in response to local need
d. Assure job opportunities for graduates
e. Indicate sustained demands for manpower
f. Build awareness of appropriate size and extent of programs necessary for recreation manpower needs.

6. *The college should allow sufficient time and provide sufficient financial support for surveying and planning a program in cooperation with recreation practitioners, related programs in the region, and existing faculty of other programs within the college.*

7. *Licensure, registration, and accreditation requirements, which affect decisions such as admission qualifications, curriculum development, faculty, and perhaps the very initiation of the program, should be explored.*

8. *The probable costs of programs, availability of faculty, etc. in relation to the feasibility of establishing programs in recreation must be examined.*

9. *Area facilities and agencies for fieldwork experiences should be included in the plans, giving consideration to their adequacy to accommodate educational needs, distance, and availability of transportation.*

10. *A written contract with agencies providing field work experiences for students should be developed.*

11. *A process for program evaluation when establishing program objectives is needed.*

12. *Proper administrative machinery for curriculum development which will provide proper support, meet entry-level job requirements, and provide career possibilities must be established.*

13. *Assistance should be given to high schools in career guidance concerning recreation programs currently sponsored or being developed.*

14. *The college should initiate planning with regional colleges and universities for the purpose of increasing articulation of recreation programs at all levels.*

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